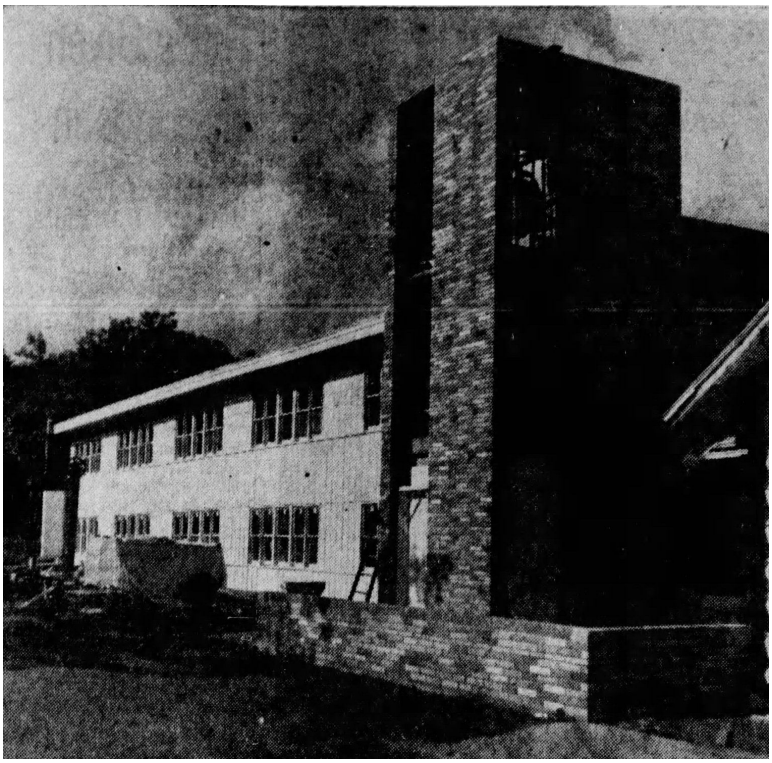


Chambers Island Retreat - Some 500 Catholic men each summer make weekend spiritual retreats at the Green Bay Diocese Holy Name Retreat House on Chambers Island, eight miles offshore from Fish Creek in Green Bay. A new $100,000 residence building and bell tower, pictured above, are being completed. Retreat ants from throughout Northeastern Wisconsin seeking a "weekend with God" travel to the island on the launch upper left, aptly christened "Quo Vadis." The Friday evening to Sunday afternoon religious exercises include prayer, quiet reflection and conferences. Lower left, a retreatant meditates on Christ's death at one of the 14 outdoor stations in the woods on the island.

(Aug 24, 1956)

Retreat House in Green Bay Island Is Weekend Haven for Prayer, Quiet

FISH CREEK (PG) - Ever felt like forgetting about everything and going to live on a remote island?

That is the opportunity groups or up to 50 men from throughout Northeastern Wisconsin have each summer weekend on Chambers Island. The Green Bay Diocesan Union of Holy Name Societies operates a unique retreat house for Catholic men on the largest island in Green bay, eight miles offshore here.

Chambers Island, which is 4 1/2 miles long and 2 1/2 miles wide, is as quiet and isolated spot as you can find. Only buildings on the rustic, peaceful island are the retreat house, an unmanned U.S. Coast Guard lighthouse with an automatic beam to guide vessels and less than a dozen private summer homes.

Open Through Summer

The island is ideally suited for retreats, periods of quiet reflection, instruction and prayer held under the direction of a parish priest. The Friday evening to Sunday afternoon retreat schedule is followed each weekend from the start of June through the middle of September.

The schedule this summer includes weekend retreats for groups of men from Sturgeon Bay, Oconto, Marinette, Chilton, Oshkosh, Green Bay, Kewaunee, New London and, Manitowoc, several general retreats and also three mid-week retreats, 18 three-day period in all.

Retreatants, according to the R v. Sylvester A. Borusky, Green Bay, Holy Name Retreat House director, include young and old men. men from all occupations. those who are too busy and those who aren't busy enough. It is not unusual for a non-Catholic to attend either, he added.

The men pay $16 as a retreat fee. This includes their meals, lodging and the boat trips to and from Chambers Island.

Nine Conferences

The typical retreat schedule includes nine conferences held in the chapel, group and private devotions such as the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross and morning and evening prayers, readings during meals, Benediction and daily Mass.

Strict silence is observed at all times. The only exception is an hour recreation period Saturday evening. Then a tour of the island or a chance to take a swim and fishermen on retreat are invited to try to hook a pike in Lake Mackaysee on Chambers Island near the retreat house. A small land in Lake Mackaysee, by the way, provides the unusual geographical situation of an island on a lake on an island in a bay of a lake.

Holy Name Retreat House was founded in 1951 with the donation of a log cabin summer home on Chambers Island by the five Baudhuin brother of Sturgeon Bay - George, Ralph, Francis, John and Clarence - to the Green Bay Diocese.

Volunteer work parties and financial contributions since have added land area, a power generating and water pumping system, a chapel in 1957, a dining room, a garage and workshop, shortwave radio contact with the mainland and a nearby building for other facilities.

Private Room Addition

Due for completion this fall is the most ambitious project yet, a $100,000 addition to provide private rooms for retreatants, rather than two- to six- man dormitories now in service.

To operate the retreat house, now in its ninth year, requires the services of Clarence Allen, the caretaker; his wife, Myrt, who prepares the meals, and Fred Wesner, who pilots the retreat house,s own boat. Several students for the priesthood from the Green Bay Diocese serve the meals and help maintain the facilities.

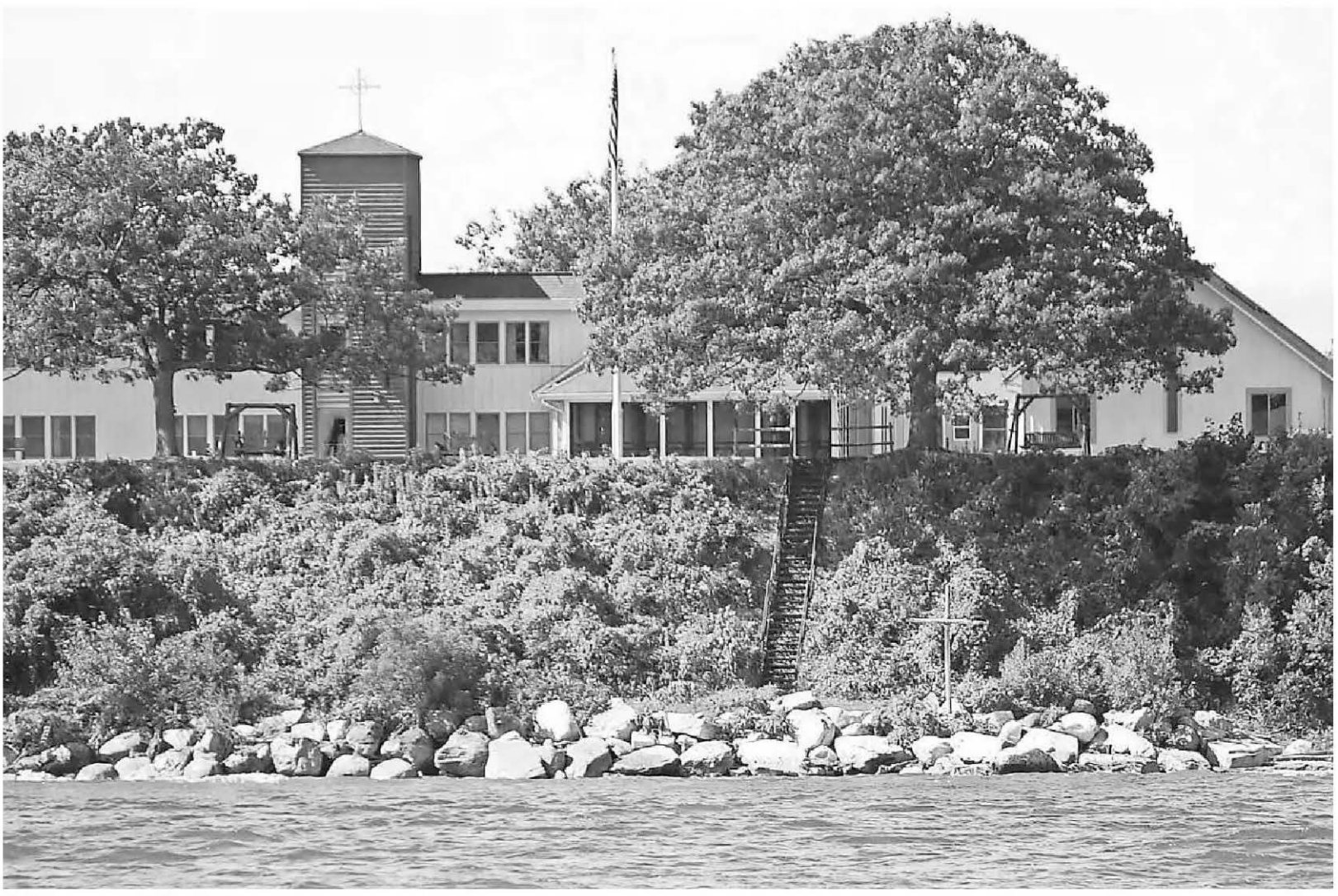
Director of the retreat house is Father Borusky who succeeded the Rev. John Mueller, now pastor of Holy Redeemer Church, Two Rivers, in 1956. Policies are formed with the aid of a committee of 15 laymen. They include, George Baudhuin and D. C. Pisha, both of Sturgeon Bay; Norbert Agamaite, Edwin J. Allen, Ray Rockers, Dr. Glen R. Stauff, Bob Stiefvater and Elmer Dennessen, all of Green Bay; J. Leslie Sensenbrenner and James Asmuth, both of Neenah; E. L. Everson, De Pere, and Harvey Stangel, Manitowoc.

Appropriate Boat Name

The boat operated by the retreat house from a dock here is an all-metal craft, 42 feet long and powered by two 100; horsepower motors. It was christened the "Quo Vadis" by Bishop Stanislaus V. Bona, Green Bay, in May 1956.

The boat's name, Latin for "Where are you going?", is particularly appropriate. On the trip to remote Chambers Island, each man is seeking the quiet and opportunity to answer for himself the question of his eternal destiny.

CHAMBERS ISLAND GROUP BUYS RETREAT PROPERTY



COURTESY OF GREEN BAY CATHOLIC DIOCESE

The Green Bay Catholic Diocese-owned Holy Name Retreat House on Chambers Island was shuttered in January 2014. The diocese recently sold 37 acres to a group of island landowners for about $575,000.

Diocese of Green Bay sells 37 acres for $575,000; buyers hope to clean up property and control its future development

SAMANTHA HERNANDEZ | USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

CHAMBERS ISLAND - The Diocese of Green Bay sold 37 acres of its shuttered Chambers Island retreat Jan. 13 to a group made up of island landowners.

The diocese closed Holy Name Retreat in January 2014 after more than 60 years in operation, citing a decline in people participating in spiritual retreats and issues with maintaining the property.

The property was sold to Chambers Island Capital Investors LLC for about $575,000, said Tammy Basten, chancellor of Holy Name Retreat House Inc. The diocese still owns 35 acres on the island and has a third-party agreement to maintain the Chambers Island marina.

The Chambers Island Nature Preserve group already had been working on purchasing land to create a 1,000-acre preserve on the island when the diocese closed the retreat, said Mary Jane Rintelman, speaking on behalf of the LLC. Rintelman is also a member of the nature preserve group.

However, the shuttered property was not able to be folded into the existing project.

"It could be part of the nature preserve if the DCLT (Door County Land Trust) had the resources and support to include it. It would require raising their original fundraising goal by quite a bit and require a commitment of the DCLT for ongoing land management," Rintelman said in a follow-up email. "When we originally talked with the DCLT we did not include these acres. Also, these acres are appraised at a higher level because of the unique placement between the inland lake and the bay."

The nature preserve group has helped purchase about 600 acres, she said. The preserve is owned by the Door County Land Trust.

Despite not being part of the preserve, the island landowners wanted to help control future development of the property.

"We were successful with getting 15 families interested and investing in our goal" of purchasing some of the diocese's property, she said.

Before any of the land can be sold, it must be cleaned up.

"The plan is to take the buildings down and divide the property up and sell it in larger pieces," Rintelman said. The group is also looking into conservation easements.

There are a few buildings that will be evaluated as things are cleared away, she said. These include a log cabin the main retreat house is built around and an old building called the Helena House.

"I think it's all to be evaluated at this point. My guess is that most of it is going to come down," she said. One reason is the buildings have gone uninhabited for about three years.

"We are not going to be selling anything this summer and (we) hope to have the land cleaned up and divided in a way that makes sense so that we can start selling lots in 2018," Rintelman said.

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